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DESCRIPTIVE DISCOURSE ON ITALY.

Mr. Walter G. Tuttle, who recently returned from an extended tour of Europe and during his absence favored Truth with letters descriptive of his travels, again contributes an interesting article to our columns. Mr. Tuttle writes:

The train from Venice to Verona crosses a long bridge and after passing a marshy, low lying stretch of shore land dotted here and there with fishermen's huts. It soon reaches Padova surrounded by fortified walls built of the common Roman bricks, which are much thinner than those of the present age. They are longer and broader, but only about one-half as thick and are red and much stronger, and were either much harder baked or else age has made them firmer and more solid than our bricks. We observed the same kind of brick in portions of some English buildings which were built originally by the Romans. There is not much of interest in the way of art at Padova. But the view from our car window is intensely interesting. In fact every little village in Italy has such odd and generally artistic buildings that combined with the inevitable great cathedral and the medieval fortifications—one cannot pass the most obscure town without a desire to explore the old palaces and castles—often these buildings are long since deserted and appear desolate enough. But they stand as great sentinels of past glory and power. Our train passes through a highly cultivated and fertile country, through the city of Viterbo, and after a two hours' run from Venice we are at Verona, a city of about 62,000 inhabitants, also surrounded by a fortified wall and containing many fine buildings and some of the best preserved medieval architecture of northern Italy. This city was the home of Romeo and Juliet and Shakespeare based his play on events which actually took place in Verona during the fourteenth century. Romeo was one of the Montechi family and the house they resided in is pointed out by the proud native, as is the house formerly occupied by Juliet. Her tomb is also shown in one of the suppressed monasteries. The natives take pride in showing these interesting spots (and are inclined to exaggerate) but they can speak so little English that we are obliged to depend on our Baedeker. Juliet's house is a five-story, red brick, with a verandah on the fourth floor. It is somewhat

higher than the verandah usually shown on the stage. It struck me that Romeo must have required a hook and ladder truck to have reached his sweetheart in the verandah love-making, or possibly the house has grown taller with time. It has had several hundreds of years to grow, thus placing the verandah at a much higher elevation. Well, please don't accept either of these theories, they are merely speculative observations of my own. Be it as it may, she is greatly honored, as every young lady who visits her tomb tucks her card thereon—there's hundreds of them, mostly American names. The great amphitheater, almost a duplicate of the colosseum at Rome, is better preserved and nearly as large (was erected by Diocletian A. D. 299, and seats 20,000 spectators)—nearly all Italian cities have one. Pompeii possessed its amphitheatre. Verona has some of the most quaint and interesting bridges and buildings imaginable. The great Scaligero bridge across the Adige, was built in 1360, and is entirely stone, with immense embattled walls on its sides and towers with hundreds of loop holes, meets one's ideals of medieval construction. In fact, Verona is, with its many old castles, palaces, bridges, etc., a very satisfactory city to visit for one who is interested in the architecture of the second to fifteenth centuries, as it possesses so many well preserved buildings dating back to that early period. In all Italian cities milk is brought to your door "on the hoof," so to speak, for the cows or goats in droves are driven through the streets from door to door. They lie down on the walks, in the shade of the buildings. The children pet them. There are certainly obvious advantages in procuring milk this way. It is 91 miles from Verona to Milan. We took a fast train and made it in three hours and twenty minutes. Milan is a very progressive business city, and in the consequent march of progress the antique has given way to the modern and little remains to remind one of its past glories. But its pride is justly placed in the possession of one of the most magnificent (and largest) cathedrals in the world. It holds about 40,000 people and its "Parco Pubblico," Baedeker says, is the finest park in Italy. Milan has 490,000 population and in the eleventh century had 300,000. It was founded 400 years B. C., still it shows a much faster growth than most Italian cities. We go up into the Italian lake region from here, to Como among the Alps, about one hour by train. The ice peaks are plainly visible from Milan.

WALTER G. TUTTLE.

Alcohol and Ethereal.

Alcohol is the English form of the Arabic "alkohl," spirit or essence. In the original the word corresponds exactly with our word "ethereal."

Most Powerful Explosive.

Dunnite, invented by Col. Beverly W. Dunn, of the Sandy Hook station, is said to be the most powerful explosive known.

Oil Destroys Cement.

Oil or fat is said to destroy Portland cement, causing cracks and even disintegration in a few months' time.

Bicycles in England.

The bicycle boom is so big in England that the factories cannot keep pace with the demands.

Derivation of Brochure.

A brochure is a small book, stitched not bound, so named from the French "brocher," to stitch.

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